



WOKING COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Wednesday 12th May 2021 at 6.30pm
Via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Tim Stokes	Chair
Rob Kemp	Vice Chair
Jonathan Miles	
Mike Mulheron	
Ben Smith	
Yasmin Aslam	
Rosh Sellahewa	
Anne Middleton	
Alastair MacAulay	
Brett Freeman	

In Attendance:

Laura Cook	Assistant Principal
Barbara Maude	Clerk to the Board of Trustees

Item	Agenda Description	Action																
1.	<p>Apologies for Absence & Declarations of Interest The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cullum Mitchell and the apology was agreed. No other Trustee or member of SLT declared any pecuniary or other direct or indirect personal interest in any item on the agenda.</p>																	
2.	<p>Introduction The Principal confirmed that the strategic intent of the meeting was to focus primarily on the Teacher Assessed Grades Policy and a review of the College's Quality Improvement Plan. The meeting would also highlight how challenging the current landscape was for the College and how it was looking to respond to those challenges.</p>																	
3.	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting The Board received the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24th March 2021. The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and approved for signature by the Chair.</p>																	
4.	<p>Matters arising To review any matters arising</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Matter</th> <th>By Whom</th> <th>Status</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>OWCC – developments</td> <td>BFR</td> <td>Ongoing</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Link Governor Scheme/Protocol</td> <td>BMA</td> <td>May 2021</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Trustees photos & biographies</td> <td>All</td> <td>May 2021</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>In terms of the OWCC developments then it was noted that the Principal would cover this under his oral update which formed the next agenda item. In respect of item 2, the Clerk</p>		Matter	By Whom	Status	1	OWCC – developments	BFR	Ongoing	2	Link Governor Scheme/Protocol	BMA	May 2021	3	Trustees photos & biographies	All	May 2021	
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	<p>had circulated, as requested after the previous meeting, details of the curriculum areas and asked those Trustees who wished to form a link to a particular department to let her have details of their preferences. This information had been provided to the Deputy Principal and he in turn had facilitated email introductions between the Trustees and their chosen Head of Department. To date, 7 Trustees had asked to be linked to a Department. It was anticipated that the first Link visits could take place later this term.</p> <p>In respect of item 3, the Clerk would contact any Trustee directly who had not yet provided a photograph and biography for inclusion on the College website.</p>	BMA
	PRINCIPAL'S REPORT	
5.	<p>The Principal provided an oral update on cross College issues. Current data showed all KPIs were good with 1,355 students currently on roll. The College had received 150 more applications than at the same time last year and had received 1,029 acceptances to date. As advised previously, the Principal considered that learner numbers for 2021/22 could potentially range from 1,480 to 1,580 by the October census date.</p> <p>In accordance with recent government advice, it would no longer be mandatory for masks to be worn within College from Monday although learners would still be required to wear them on public transport travelling to and from the College. The College, as at today, had no positive cases of COVID-19, neither did they have any learner or staff having to self-isolate and there had been no track or trace notifications for 4 weeks.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that all learners and staff were being asked to complete lateral flow tests on a Wednesday and a Sunday, and the College were continuing to promote and encourage social distancing and hand washing which if maintained should keep the prevalence rates down. To further support this approach, the Principal would be re-iterating these key points in a letter being sent out to all parents tomorrow.</p> <p>In terms of marketing, the College was launching two physical Open Evenings split separately for Year 10 and Year 11's. A booking system would be used to schedule slots thus enabling the number of visitors on site to be controlled. There would also be a Taster event for Year 10's.</p> <p>The results day for GCSE's had been brought forward to 12th August and to coincide with this the College had focussed its marketing approach to be more generic in content this year but the College's image was continuing to be actively promoted in the usual methods.</p> <p>In terms of Learning, Teaching and Assessment, the Principal re-iterated his praise for staff in their efforts to help all learners achieve. He also reported that the Easter revision sessions had gone very well.</p> <p>There were no health and safety issues to report.</p> <p>In terms of staffing, the Principal acknowledged that very few members of staff had left at the end of 2019/20 but possibly due to that fact there had now been a number of resignations and in total 16 staff were due to leave. Almost all were due to retirements, career progression or house moves but it had resulted in a considerable amount of management man hours spent in the selection process for new members of staff.</p>	

	<p>Trustees asked the Principal a series of questions including if there had been a concentration of teachers leaving from areas that had been of concern in terms of results; which areas were proving to be challenging to recruit; whether staff leaving posed a question over the viability of courses; and if the College were appointing staff to move the current ethnicity profile forward. The Principal in responding, highlighted that teachers had left from both Philosophy and Latin which had been areas of concern, the position of Head of Business and Economics was a challenging post to recruit; there had been no applications for Italian this year which had not been a surprise and 2021/22 would be the final year for Latin; and that it was ultimately his responsibility to ensure that there was no element of unconscious bias in any aspect of the appointment process.</p> <p>In terms of site issues, air conditioning had been installed in the Beldam Theatre over the Easter holidays and a new Costa Coffee outlet had been put into the canteen.</p> <p>The results of the CIF bid had yet to be announced and in terms of the £83 million DfE capital expansion fund, bid results had been scheduled to be announced on 26th April but to date still nothing had been heard. The purchase and planned installation of the porta cabins (temporary accommodation) was progressing and whilst the demand for suitable contractors was high the College's consultant was confident that they would be installed and operational for August 2021.</p> <p>The College were also looking at plans to expand outdoor social space together with improvements to the staff room to again create more space.</p> <p>The successful CIF windows project was due to be finished by 26th August 2021.</p> <p>Developments in terms of the OWCC continued appropriately and currently various necessary surveys were being undertaken. Finally, in terms of the 3G pitch the College had now leased an area of 6 square metres to UK Power Networks to enable them to locate the required sub-station.</p>	
	<p>LEARNER VOICE</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>The Principal gave an oral summary of a meeting with the newly appointed Student Union representatives, Eleana Fiorini (President); Rachael Stirzaker (Vice President Academic) and Roxanne Adams (Vice President Social).</p> <p>He highlighted that in terms of positives, the Student Union representatives had said that they felt the College had dealt well with the COVID-19 pandemic; online sessions had been engaging; they liked the physical space available on site; they considered that the College rules were appropriate but relaxed; they expressed the view that teachers were here because they wanted to be here which compared favourably to the student's experience at school; and that subjects such as Art and Drama were seen as being on par with other subjects.</p> <p>As to areas for development, they commented that the canteen was crowded at times and that the promotion of enrichment could have been better promoted although this was seen as in part due to the pandemic and lockdown.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Board would hold a student focus groups post 21st June so that</p>	

	Trustees could talk directly to students on these and other subjects.	TST/BFR
	STRATEGIC ITEMS	
7.	<p>Anti-Racism and the Role of College Boards</p> <p>The Chair of the Board introduced the 10 Point Plan devised by the Black FE Leadership Group & New Vic Sixth Form College together with the presentation made to the recent SFCA Governance webinar on how to promote a culture of anti-racism within the FE sector. The purpose of this agenda item was to bring the 10 Point Plan to the attention of the Board, to invite SLT to comment on where the College was against the 10 points and to begin a discussion. The SFCA presentation acknowledged that the values and behaviours at Board level and within SLT set the standards throughout Colleges and Boards had to confidently drive positive ongoing cultural change. In addition, diversification of the Board was part of the journey to ensure that they better serve and reflect the communities within which they operated.</p> <p>In terms of data, the Principal confirmed that student performance and staff data by ethnicity were published in the annual Self-Assessment Report. In addition, the College's approach was that ethnicity was one of the protected characteristics and that the College's culture was to treat every student in the most positive way.</p> <p>An observation was made that it was important for institutions to understand that learners and staff could have experiences that were different because of their colour. For example, staff networks for BAME groups within the education sector existed and where those networks available or promoted within College. The Principal advised that currently there wasn't a BAME staff network within College although national organisations were available. The Principal emphasised that the College itself was relatively small and hence data would be very different if compared to a large FE College. The Board considered that as Boards should lead on ensuring positive culture change and to demonstrate to staff that the Board was listening, that it was an appropriate time to convene a staff focus group. Staff focus groups had taken place before the pandemic but had been suspended due to lockdown but it was agreed that a staff focus group should be held, preferably before the end of the academic year, in order that Trustees could raise the rationale behind the 10 point plan with staff whilst also using it an opportunity to discuss a broad range of cross college issues.</p> <p>It was also suggested that the 10 Point Plan could be something that Trustees discussed with their respective Heads of Department when undertaking their link visits.</p>	TST/BFR
	TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT	
8.	<p>Reports</p> <p>The Assistant Principal presented to the Board the College's Teacher Assessed Grades (TAG) Policy and the related procedures for Teaching departments. Every centre was required to create a Centre Policy that reflected its individual circumstances. The document took into account guidance provided on the determination of grades for A/AS Levels and GCSE's for summer 2021 and also Ofqual guidance for heads of centres, heads of departments and teachers on the submission of teacher assessed grades for the summer 2021. A Head of Department checklist and declaration were also reviewed.</p>	

	<p>The Board welcomed the very comprehensive policy and commended the work of SLT, most notably the Deputy Principal for his work in producing the policy. The aim of the policy was to ensure that teacher assessed grades were determined fairly, consistently, free from bias and effectively within and across all subjects and departments.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal highlighted certain elements of the policy, for example, the arrangements for the appropriateness of evidence, the range of different assessments and the measures in place to authenticate evidence presented by students. The Board asked about the Viva Voce assessment, should there be a case where a teacher was concerned about the authenticity of a specific piece of work and the Assistant Principal explained the process in place to confirm validity. If authenticity could not be substantiated, then the evidence would not be included in the grading process for the student. In addition, it was confirmed that the Principal, Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal would conduct an internal standardisation across all subjects and grades before signing off the final teacher assessed grades. The process would take place using anonymised data to ensure all students were treated fairly and equally and that there was no risk of any unconscious bias in the grading process. The College would also ensure fairness and transparency by comparing the teacher assessed grades at qualification levels to results from previous cohorts taking the same qualification. Comparisons would be made with cohorts taking exams in 2017 to 2019.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal then presented the Quality Improvement Plan review for 2021/22. Significant progress had been made towards most targets and where less progress had been made this was predominantly linked to COVID-10 restrictions and lockdown. The Board again welcomed the document which demonstrated areas of significant progress during challenging circumstances.</p>	
	<p>FINANCE</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>The Acting Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee introduced the February and April 2021 Management Accounts. In a change to the agenda, the April accounts had been released as opposed to the March accounts to provide the latest financial position. The Acting Chair thanked the Finance Director and her team for their efforts in getting the latest accounts to them. With the vacancy in the Finance Team now filled, he was assured that accounts would be circulated in a timely fashion going forward.</p> <p>In headline terms, the April Management Accounts indicated that there was an operating surplus of £456K which was £363k better than the budgeted surplus to date. The forecast operating surplus had been revised for the year end to £746k due to amendments to the forecast under non-pay expenditure and ESFA grants. Cash days in hand remained strong at 162.2 together with a very strong cash balance as at 30th April 2021. The cash position was higher than the original cash flow forecast due to an improved result for the year ended 31st August 2020.</p> <p>A review of the balance sheet clearly showed that the value of assets exceeded the value of liabilities so the College’s financial position taking this and all other current ratios into account remained strong.</p> <p>The management commentary explained the additional monies received and on pages 11 and 12 details of expenditure – both pay and non-pay were also set out. In terms of capital</p>	

	<p>expenditure whilst there had been an update to include the expected cost of extending the staff room and additional outdoor social space the anticipated work on the OWCC was unlikely to happen this year so the forecast had been updated to remove the earmarked amount for this project.</p> <p>In terms of cash flow, the Acting Chair confirmed that at present the cash flow forecast only showed a 12-month position and he felt that ideally the cash flow forecast should cover at least 2 years (to August 2022) to enable more effective monitoring and this was an aspect he was discussing with the Finance Director. The Principal concurred and said that the College would be working towards ideally presenting a 3-year cash flow forecast. The Principal also commented that the College remained prudent in setting the original budget and accordingly set recruitments costs at the highest point on the pay scale but as the College did not always appoint to the top pay scale there were likely to be savings that flowed from that as was also the case if staff left mid-year. However, he did wish to re-iterate that the College were fully meeting the needs of their students and they were also meeting resource requests from staff. He also assured the Board that all operational needs were covered in the original budget and highlighted that if the College continued to act prudently then in future years it could be in a position to meet some capital expansion from its own resources without full reliance upon the ESFA.</p> <p>The Acting Chair made two concluding comments. Firstly, that it should be noted the new Strategic Plan set out the College's ambition to build its reserves so that it could offer a significant contribution to capital projects. Therefore, the building of a healthy reserves position was to be commended and secondly he was working with the Finance Director to include more information around budget sensitivities which should be reflected in the budget proposed for 2021/22. He would like to include the financial impact of percentage variations in key budget drivers.</p> <p>The Board also reviewed the DfE School Resource Management Self-Assessment Tool Checklist. This year it had become mandatory for this to be signed off by the Chair and approved by the Board. As the timing had fallen outside of the schedule of meetings, the Chair had signed off the checklist and it had been submitted in accordance with the required timelines. The Board were on this occasion asked to retrospectively approve the checklist and in future years it would be brought to the March Board meeting to comply with the Academies Planning Calendar.</p> <p>The Board resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the February 2021 Management Accounts; • To approve the April 2021 Management Accounts; and • School Resource Management Checklist. 	<p>FMU/ RKE</p>
	<p>POLICY WATCH</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>The Board reviewed the Grievance Procedure which had been reviewed and updated in line with the recommendations of the College's HR advisors Strictly Education 4S. As the policy contained reference to Trustee involvement in a possible appeal scenario, the Board did discuss the need, should the circumstances arise, to retain Trustee impartiality. After discussion it was agreed that this was referenced under paragraph 6 and so the policy did not need to be revised further. However, as a general point it was acknowledged that there</p>	

	<p>may be a scenario when certain Trustees would have to be effectively kept in the dark about a grievance should they be required to hear an appeal.</p> <p>The Board also reviewed the Standing Orders of the Board of Trustees which provided the framework within which the Board operated. The Standing Orders had been originally approved in July 2018 and were now due to be reviewed. The Clerk had suggested some minor amendments to reflect that the Board did not retain a Staff Trustee on the Board, that the Deputy Principal should attend in the absence of the Principal and references to the Governance Handbook and the Academies Financial Handbook should be updated. Also in line with the recommendation of the Succession Planning Working Group, when considering the re-appointment of a Trustee for a third term of office, where a Trustee had particular skills the Board wished to retain, any such appointment should be limited to a term of two years, as opposed to the usual four-year term of office.</p> <p>The Board resolved to approve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Grievance Procedure; and 2. Standing Orders of the Board of Trustees. 	
	<p>GOVERNANCE</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>The Board reviewed the minutes of the Succession Planning Working Group held on 28th April 2021, noting that the Working Group had considered the applications for re-appointment of both Mike Mulheron and Jonathan Miles and wished to retain the excellent and valuable contributions that both Trustees brought to the Board.</p> <p>It was noted that if both Trustees were to be re-appointed, Mike as a members' appointment and Jonathan as a co-opted Trustee then a new Parent Trustee would have to be recruited in the autumn term and this would increase the number of the Board to 12. The DfE anecdotally preferred Boards to be small with 11 as the preference but it was further noted however that it was permissible to increase the size of the Board of Trustees to accommodate the proposed changes as the Board could additionally appoint co-opted Trustees.</p> <p>As already mentioned earlier in the meeting when reviewing the current Standing Orders and specifically the reference to Trustees not ordinarily being considered for a third term of office that the Working Party recommended to the Board that in terms of any appointments for a third term of office then these should be limited to a two-year period.</p> <p>The Board resolved to approve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The recommendation that the Members re-appoint Mike Mulheron for a period of two years with effect from 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2023; 2. The appointment of Jonathan Miles as a co-opted Trustee for a period of two years with effect from 1st September 2021 to 31st August 2023; 3. To amend the Standing Orders to provide that any re-appointment for a third term should be limited to a period of two years. <p>The Clerk asked all Trustees to complete the NGA Trustee Self-Assessment Checklist in order that the annual Trustee self-assessment process could get underway. It was proposed that individually all Trustees should review the checklist and then as had taken place last year a</p>	<p>ALL</p>

	separate, standalone session could take place so that the Board could collectively feedback their responses.	
12.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Chair raised with the Board the question of whether there was a wish to resume face to face meetings, starting with the next scheduled meeting in July, should the country continue to see lockdown restrictions easing. There was a general consensus that the July meeting should be a face to face meeting held with appropriate social distancing measures in place, provided there continued to be a lifting of government restrictions at the time of the next meeting. However, some Trustees indicated that they may not be able to attend physically so would wish to retain the option to be able to join remotely.</p> <p>It was also agreed that the Clerk would circulate to Trustees the dates of the planned Summer Open Evenings and the private view for the Lightbox Art Exhibition.</p>	BMA
13.	<p>Date & Time of Next Meetings</p> <p>It was agreed that the next meeting of the Board would take place on Wednesday 7th July 2021 at 6.30pm. The exact arrangements as to whether this would be a face to face meeting would be confirmed nearer the time.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.20pm.</p> <p>Signed: Dated:</p>	BMA